



## FISCAL MEMORANDUM

### SB 197 - HB 809

February 27, 2023

**SUMMARY OF BILL AS AMENDED (004324):** Requires each local education agency (LEA) and public charter school to adopt a policy that student-teacher ratios must not exceed the maximum class sizes, as opposed to the maximum class-size averages established. Requires the student-teacher ratios, as opposed to the average student-teacher ratios, to establish the minimum number of regular classroom teaching positions in a school. Requires the maximum class size, as opposed to the average size specified for the grade levels involved in split-grade classes, to be the maximum size allowed for such classes. Deletes the average class size column from the prescribed class size table in this section.

Removes the authority of LEAs that use the career academy or small learning community model to extend class sizes in career and technical education (CTE) classes in grades nine through twelve (9-12). Upon request of an LEA or public charter school, expands the authority of the Commissioner of DOE to grant a waiver from the maximum class sizes established in this section, rather than only in the event of a natural disaster that results in the enrollment of displaced students.

### FISCAL IMPACT OF BILL AS AMENDED:

#### NOT SIGNIFICANT

Assumptions for the bill as amended:

- Tennessee Code Annotated § 49-1-104 establishes the maximum class size averages and maximum class size as follows:
  - 20 and 25 for grades kindergarten through three;
  - 25 and 30 for grades four through six;
  - 30 and 35 for grades seven through twelve; and
  - 20 and 25 for career and technical education (CTE).
- Tennessee Code Annotated § 49-1-104(a) requires every public local school system to have as a policy that pupil-teacher ratios should not exceed the class size averages prescribed in this section.
- The proposed legislation will require LEAs and public charter schools to set student-teacher-ratios that do not exceed the maximum class sizes. This will allow class sizes in all grade bands to become larger, up to the allowed limit.
- Allowing student-teacher ratios that do not exceed the maximum class sizes will increase the potential size of classrooms across all grade bands and CTE classes by five

additional students. If an LEA or public charter school is granted a waiver, the classroom sizes may increase beyond five students.

- LEAs and public charter school are currently authorized under current law to structure class room sizes to be smaller than the prescribed maximum amounts.
- The Tennessee Investment in Student Achievement (TISA) funding formula does not use class size as a funding variable. LEAs would continue to be funded based on their average daily membership and the various characteristics of their students through TISA.
- It is assumed that State Special Schools and schools in the Achievement School District will continue to structure classroom sizes such that additional expenditures will not be required.
- If LEAs choose to adopt larger class sizes, which would increase student-teacher ratios, fewer teachers may be required. While this would result in cost savings, it is assumed that those funds would be shifted to other purposes such that any fiscal impact would be not significant.

### **CERTIFICATION:**

The information contained herein is true and correct to the best of my knowledge.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Krista Lee Carsner". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Krista Lee Carsner, Executive Director

/ah